
REPORT TITLE: **2020 Virtual Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference**

FROM: Kathryn Lockyer, Interim Commissioner of Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the approach outlined in the report entitled "2020 Virtual Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference," be endorsed.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- On March 5, 2020, the Government Relations Committee (GRC) approved the report titled *"The 2020 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference"*, which outlined the Region's approach to advance its advocacy priorities at this year's conference.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 AMO Conference will now be held virtually from August 17 – 19, 2020
- Details about how the conference events will be moved virtually have not been released yet however, AMO has committed that the networking and delegation opportunities will be available
- Once details are released, Regional staff will request delegations with provincial ministers and opposition parties, with the goal of advancing Regional Council's advocacy priorities.
- This report proposes a revised, focused approach to how the Region will advance its key advocacy priorities given the new format.
- To help ensure input from GRC members can be incorporated into the final briefing material, it is proposed that a virtual AMO Conference preparation workshop be held in mid-July.

1. Background

On March 5, 2020, the Government Relations Committee (GRC) approved the report titled "The 2020 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference". This report outlined the Region's approach to advance its advocacy priorities at the 2020 AMO Conference. In response to COVID-19, the 2020 AMO Annual Conference (Conference) will now be held virtually and take place August 17 - 19, 2020.

AMO has indicated that there will be opportunities for municipal delegations to meet with ministry representatives, including ministers and senior staff, and opposition party leaders. In addition, AMO has also indicated that forums will still take place virtually, so this may include the Ministers' Forum which is usually held at the annual conference.

Given the new format of the conference, it is proposed that the Region revise its approach to advancing its key advocacy priorities to focus on policy considerations to address the significant

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impacts of COVID-19 on the Region's programs and services. With COVID-19 resulting in significant financial implications for the Region, it is recommended that the advocacy positions advanced during this year's conference focus on these impacts. The positions that will be advanced will be consistent with the positions that have been adopted by several of the GTHA Mayors and Chairs with respect to short, medium- and long-term strategies to support municipalities and local economies.

2. Virtual Ministerial Delegations

At the March 5, 2020 GRC meeting, direction was given to staff to focus on one or two priorities and present potential solutions to help have more meaningful solution-based conversations. The virtual meetings with the Ministers present an opportunity to discuss how the Region can work collaboratively with the Province towards economic recovery. These meetings can also be used as an opportunity to discuss the financial implications related to COVID-19 and the challenges this will have to delivering essential services to Peel's residents and businesses. The deadline to submit delegation meeting requests is June 30, 2020.

a) 2020 Region of Peel Proposed Advocacy Priority Themes

In response to the direction given at the March GRC meeting, as well as the significant financial impacts COVID-19 has had on the Region's services, it is proposed that main messaging advanced at this year's Conference focus on the following two Council endorsed positions:

The Province provide:

- Additional funding to offset the substantial incremental costs and loss of revenue associated with the COVID pandemic;
- Increased infrastructure funding to stimulate Peel's economic recovery and that an allocation model be implemented to distribute funds expeditiously

On June 11, 2020, Regional staff presented the financial impacts to key service areas. The table below includes the services that have been most significantly impacted.

Programs	Increased Costs (millions)
Paramedic Services	\$4.7
Long Term Care	\$8.8
Public Health	\$4.9
Homelessness Support	\$11.8
Housing Support	\$7.0
Child Care	\$6.8
Waste Management	\$4.0
Community Investment Program	\$1.1

In addition, the Region is forecasting a deficit of \$14.4 million for utility rate supported services and a shortfall of \$700 million in development charge revenue from 2020 to 2024.

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As there may be opportunities to meet with a several ministers at this year's Conference, the Region could highlight the specific service level impacts and potential solutions with relevant ministers. In addition, as part of the national and provincial economic recovery efforts, it is anticipated that an infrastructure funding program will be implemented. The Region can use the delegation meetings to proactively provide input into the design of this program.

It is important to note that any position advanced related to specific service area has been endorsed by Regional Council. As the Region's response to COVID-19 is constantly evolving, the approach outlined above will continue to be amended.

b) AMO Conference Preparation Workshop

To help prepare for the virtual Conference, staff recommends moving forward with the workshop originally planned for mid-July. As the Region and the Province's response to COVID-19 continues to rapidly evolve, this workshop will be used to confirm messaging and allow staff to incorporate any input received from GRC members into the briefing materials and other documents being prepared.

c) Coordination with Local Municipalities

The Region is usually notified by Ministers' offices whether the delegation request has been accepted approximately one to two weeks prior the start of the AMO Conference. As meeting delegations are confirmed, to avoid scheduling conflicts, Region of Peel staff will coordinate Mayor/Councillor participation in the specific meetings with staff from Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga. This will also provide an opportunity to assign meetings based on Mayor/Councillor interest and availability.

The Region will also work with local municipal staff to seek joint delegations, where appropriate.

3. Additional Initiatives

While we don't have details on how the conference will take place, if possible, the Region will pursue additional advocacy opportunities which may include:

- Hosting a virtual briefing session with Peel MPPs prior to the conference to help raise awareness of the Region's priorities. If physical distancing conditions are lifted by the time the conference takes place, there may be an opportunity to host this meeting in person.
- Requesting virtual delegation meetings with leaders of the opposition parties and other key officials.

CONCLUSION

The 2020 virtual AMO Conference presents a valuable opportunity to advance Peel's priorities in response to COVID-19 and to demonstrate how the Region can collaborate with the Province as it implements its economic recovery efforts.

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Following the conference, the Chair of the GRC and staff will provide the Committee with an update on conference activities, follow up action items and future opportunities to advance Regional priorities.

For further information regarding this report, please contact Keith Medenblik, Manager, Strategic Public Policy & External Relations, Ext.4777, Keith.Medenblik@peelregion.ca.

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Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:

Department Commissioner and Division Director.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



N. Polsinelli, Interim Chief Administrative Officer